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WILLIAM STARLING SULLIVANT.

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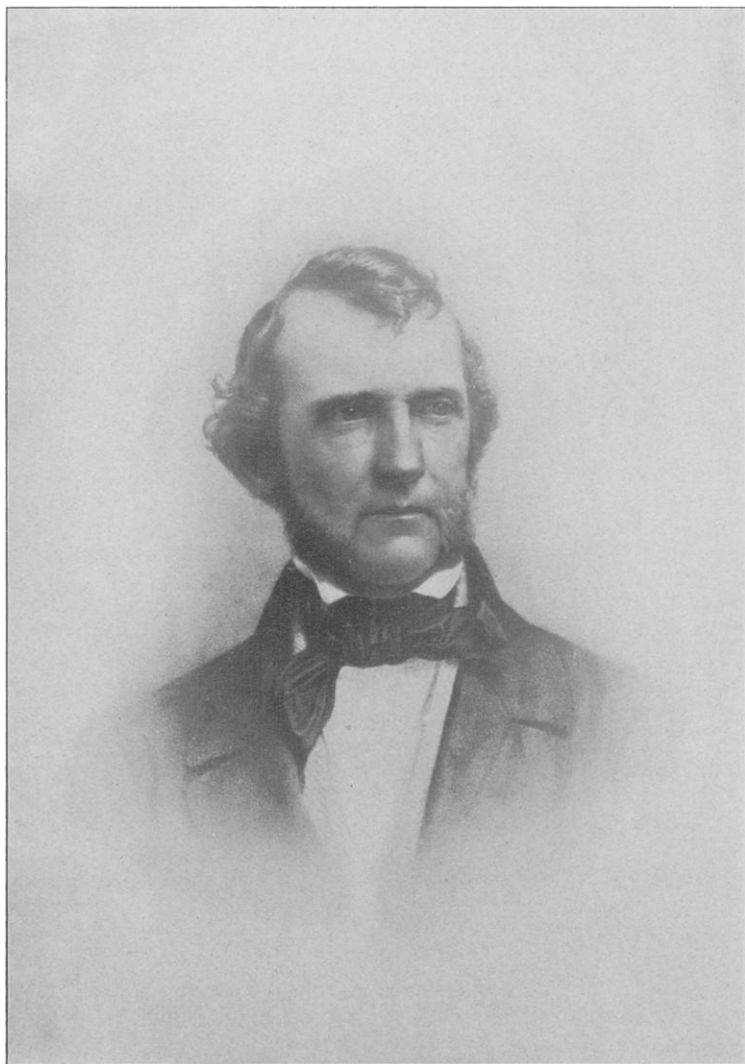
A Biographical Sketch, adapted from that of Asa Gray, as given in the Supplement of the *Icones Muscorum*, 1874.

ANNIE MORRILL SMITH.

It is only fitting that the first place in this number of *THE BRYOLOGIST* should be given to a sketch of the life of the one for whom our Chapter is named, William Starling Sullivant. He was born at the little village of Franklinton, then a frontier settlement in the midst of the primitive forest, near the site of the present city of Columbus, Ohio. His father, a Virginian, and a man of marked character, was appointed by the government to survey the lands of that district of the "Northwest Territory" which became the central part of the now populous State of Ohio; and he early purchased a large tract of land, bordering on the Scioto River, near by, if not including, the locality which afterwards was fixed upon for the State Capitol. William was his oldest son. He received the rudiments of his classical education at the Ohio University at Athens, upon the opening of that institution, after a term in a Kentucky school; was transferred to Yale College where he was graduated in 1823. His father died that year and his services were demanded by the family to care for the estate, which was mainly in lands, mills, etc. To qualify for this he became a surveyor and practical engineer and took an active part in business till the latter part of his life. Mr. Sullivant was thrice married; his first wife was Jane Marshall, of Kentucky. She died within a year after marriage. His second was Eliza G. Wheeler, a lady of rare accomplishments, a zealous and acute bryologist, her husband's efficient associate in all his scientific work until her death of cholera, in 1850 or 1851. Her botanical services are commemorated in *Hypnum Sullivanta* of Schimper, a moss then new to Ohio. His third wife, Caroline E. Sutton, survived him as well as children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren, all to inherit a stainless and honored name and to cherish a noble memory.

Mr. Sullivant was nearly thirty years old and already married, with his residence established in a suburban home surrounded by a rich flora, before his taste for such studies developed. He collected and carefully studied the plants of central Ohio, and made neat sketches of the minute parts of many of them, especially grasses and sedges, and began his correspondence with the leading botanists of the country, and in 1840 published "A Catalogue of Plants, Native or Naturalized, in the Vicinity of Columbus, Ohio," of sixty-three pages, to which he added a few pages of valuable notes. His only other publication in phanogamous botany is a short article on three new

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WILLIAM STARLING SULLIVANT.

plants which he discovered in the district, contributed to the American Journal of Science and the Arts, in 1842. His further observations and notes were communicated to friends. As soon as the flowering plants of his district ceased to afford him novelty he turned to the mosses, in which he found abundant scientific occupation of a kind well suited to his bent for patient and close observation, scrupulous accuracy, and nice distinction and discrimination.

His first publication in his chosen department was the "*Musci Alleghaniensis*," accompanied by the specimens themselves of Mosses and Hepaticæ collected in a botanical expedition through the Alleghany Mountains from Maryland to Georgia in the summer of 1843, Asa Gray being his companion. In 1846 Mr. Sullivant communicated to the American Academy the first part, and in 1849 the second part of his "*Contributions to the Bryology and Hepaticology of North America*," which appeared, one in the third, the other in the fourth volume (new series) of the Academy's Memoirs, each with five plates from the author's own admirable drawings. These plates were engraved at his own expense, and were generously given to the Academy. When the second edition of Gray's "*Manual of the Botany of the Northern United States*" was in preparation, Mr. Sullivant was asked to contribute to it a compendious account of the Musci and Hepaticæ of the region; which he did in the space of about one hundred pages, generously adding at his sole charge eight copper plates crowded with illustrations of the details of the genera, thus enhancing vastly the value of his friend's work and laying a foundation for the general study of bryology in the United States which then and thus began.

So excellent are these illustrations, both in plan and execution, that Schimper, then the leading bryologist of the Old World and a most competent judge since he has published hundreds of figures in his "*Bryologia Europæa*," not only adopted the same plan in his Synopsis of the European Mosses but also the very figures themselves (a few of which, however, originally his own), whenever they would serve his purpose, as was the case with most of them. A separate edition was published of this portion of the Manual, under the title of "*The Musci and Hepaticæ of the United States, east of the Mississippi River*" (New York, 1856, imperial octavo) upon thick paper and with proof impressions directly from the copper plates. This exquisite volume was placed on sale at far less than cost, and copies are now of great rarity and value. It was with regret that the author of the Manual omitted this cryptogamic portion from the ensuing editions and only with the understanding that a separate "*Species Muscorum*" or Manual for the Mosses of the whole United States should replace it. This most needful work Mr. Sullivant was just about to prepare for the press, when death came to close his career. His work was, however, completed by his friends, Leo Lesquereux and Thomas P. James, and is the Manual of our daily use. For an account of his various Exsiccati reference can be made to the Icones Supplement Sketch by Asa Gray.

The "*Icones Muscorum*," however, is Mr. Sullivant's crowning work,

as Prof. Gray says, and also the work with which we are most familiar. It consists, as the title indicates, of "Figures and Descriptions of most of those Mosses peculiar to Eastern North America which have not been heretofore figured," and forms an imperial octavo volume with one hundred and twenty-nine copper plates, published in 1864. The letterpress and plates are simply exquisite and wholly unrivalled, and the scientific character is acknowledged to be worthy of the setting. The second volume was in course of preparation at the time of Mr. Sullivant's death, but the material was found to be mostly in notes on herbarium sheets, etc., and the work of editing was undertaken by Leo Lesquereux who alone was in a position to complete it. This was done as a labor of love for his friend, and though pressure was brought to bear to have the name of Leo Lesquereux appear on the title page, he would not consent, and it appears as the final work of Sullivant, though the preface acknowledged this indebtedness to Lesquereux.

In accordance with his wishes all his bryological books and his exceedingly rich and important collections and preparations of mosses were consigned to the Gray Herbarium of Harvard University with a view to their safe keeping and long continued usefulness. The remainder of his botanical library, his choice microscopes, and other collections went to the State Scientific and Agricultural College established at the time of his death at Columbus, and to the Starling Medical College, founded by his uncle and of which he was himself the senior trustee.

Mr. Sullivant was chosen into the American Academy in 1845; received the honorary degree of Doctor of Laws from Gambier College in his native State, was an associate of the principal scientific societies of this country and of several in Europe. His oldest botanical associates long ago enjoyed the pleasure of bestowing the name SULLIVANTIA OHIONIS upon a very rare plant, a Saxifrage, which he himself discovered in his native State on the secluded banks of a tributary of the river which flows by the place where he was born and where his remains now repose.

SPORE DISTRIBUTION IN BUXBAUMIA.

A. J. GROUT.

Mr. Dixon in his Handbook of British Mosses states that *Buxbaumia aphylla* scatters its spores by the rupture of the capsule walls. Schimper in the *Bryologia Europea* states that the tube of the peristome is so narrow that the spores cannot pass out after the capsule dies and the peristome becomes twisted.

The peristome of *Buxbaumia* is so perfectly developed that it has not seemed probable to me that it could be a useless organ, and for several years I have been trying to get fresh specimens just at the time of complete maturity and before the spores had been shed. Early last June Mr. Walter Gerritson sent me in some specimens which were in just the right condition and when the capsules were lightly tapped with a pencil the spores were projected as far and as freely as in *Webera sessilis*. After dehiscence the